



Lakewood Discovery Center

Salina Parks and Recreation Department

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Spring 2007

Lakewood Discovery Center Newsletter Features

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Lakewood Trivia

Lakewood Discovery Center is the Natural Resources division of the Salina Parks & Recreation Department. LDC provides Salina with its own Urban Wildlife Sanctuary and Nature Center. Our mission and goal is to provide opportunities for members of the community and the surrounding area to explore and learn about the environment through discovery and hands on activities.

We strive to make the center a teaching tool by providing many outdoor aspects in an indoor setting. Visitors have the chance not only to interact with our many educational displays, but also get up close to some of the wildlife that lives in the park. Through these encounters, the visitors' awareness and knowledge of native wildlife will increase.

As our community grows, we also want to grow with it. We want to continue to provide a great place to observe and learn about nature. For no matter if you are younger or older, it is essential to remember that the environment is not ours, it is merely ours to take care of and pass along to the future caretakers of the land.

The Supervisor's Desk:

As winter slowly retreats to the opposite side of the world, we are lured outside by the warm weather and sunshine. This yearly transition brings out the kid in most of us. We press against the window pane hoping to go back outside to play, to get dirty digging in the yard, to get out our toys that have been put away all winter, to just feel young and ambitious again.

Every year we rush to get back outside to try and show mother-nature that we can manipulate her by planting flowers and veggies early, in the hopes of impressing that one nosy neighbor or family member with an early bounty. Patience my fellow green thumb, patience is the word of the season. Pushing your plants out the door to fend for themselves early is only inviting disaster into your garden. Trust me, I am guilty of executing a few tomato plants myself. Instead, March is a perfect month to do all your prep work in your garden: clearing/pruning last year's remnants, soil enrichment with compost/fertilizer, and early perennial transplants. The work you put in now will pay off in April and May. Never mind that crazy person down the road that always has their garden out by early March. They are willing to replant in April.

Now as a really disciplined gardener, you may want to commit those sections of your gardens you want to be seen in early spring to early season perennials. This way you won't have to worry about a late frost, not to mention the reduced maintenance. In addition to the early season perennial plants, you may want to go with a whole perennial garden that blooms year long. These have become very popular and are Lakewood's choice when planting, though we lean toward the native perennials. Not only does this theme fit our criteria for native gardens, but the work load is reduced, and once established these plants pay for themselves. Planting native perennial gardens that are very hardy and drought resistant also make a world of difference in July and August, especially if water is a continuing concern in Saline County. If you would like to know more about Lakewood's gardens, give us a call, or stop by and check them out, after March of course. Just remember, the most beautiful flowers are grown out of the ugliest piles of manure.

Brian Underwood, Natural Resources Supervisor





Lakewood Wildlife Feature: EARTH DAY EVERY DAY



Did you know that there are actually two different Earth Days held every year? The first observed Earth Day was the brain-child of John McConnell, the creator of the Earth Flag. He “first introduced the idea of a global holiday at a UNESCO Conference on the Environment in 1969, the same year that he designed the Earth flag.” This was in response to seeing the first photos of Earth taken by astronauts in space, and the realization that our Earth is the only one we have and that we need to take care of it. “The first Earth Day proclamation was issued by San Francisco Mayor Joseph Alioto on March 21, 1970,” which is the vernal equinox. Celebrating Earth Day on the equinox is significant because that is when, at any place on Earth, day and night are of equal length. The United Nations continues to observe Earth Day with a ceremony each year on the March equinox, where at the precise moment of the equinox, the U.N. Peace Bell is rung.

Small changes make a BIG difference!

- Turn off the water when brushing teeth
- Take shorter showers
- Fix leaks in your car (oil leaks, etc.)
- Recycle
- Use Earth-friendly cleaning products
- Take hazardous waste (cleaners, paint, oil, etc.) to the HHW facility
- Walk or bike instead
- Do not litter, and pick up trash when possible
- Wash your car with biodegradable soap
- Compost your organic waste
- Buy from “green” companies
- Turn off lights when not in the room
- Plant gardens and crops that are native or indigenous to the area
- Visit www.epa.gov for more Earth saving ideas

The Earth Day that the United States observes is held every **April 22**. It was started by Senator Gaylord Nelson, who “called for an Environmental Teach-In (Earth Day) to be held on April 22, 1970 . . . He modeled it on the highly effective Vietnam War protests of the time.” In the 1960s, many people were beginning to be concerned about human impact on the environment, but this concern had not reached the political arena. Nelson aimed to change that with a grassroots campaign to organize Earth Day on campuses across the country, with Denis Hayes as National Coordinator of the event. Over 20 million participated on that first Earth Day. This did indeed succeed in bringing the environment to the forefront and allowed for important environmental laws, like the Clean Air Act, and the formation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

But why is Earth Day important? This planet is the only home we have. Would you knowingly damage the roof of your house? Would you purposefully throw garbage on your living room floor? Would you add pollutants to the water coming out of your faucet? No! So why do it to our global home? What is done to our Earth has lasting consequences. This is due to its delicately balanced processes that allow the whole system (climate, ecosystems, etc.) to work. Therefore it is vitally important that we are conscious of what we do, not only as individuals, but as a society and global community.

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world”
John Muir



But what can we do as individuals? It's as simple as the decisions we make. We can make Earth-sound decisions about what we buy and how we dispose of waste. We can make small changes in our habits and make a big difference in the world. See the list at left for just a few ideas to begin your journey toward a more Earth-sustaining lifestyle.



What are we doing at Lakewood

Discovery Center to celebrate Earth Day? We have two Earth Day celebrations with our local third graders, with different stations led by local environmental agencies. We also will be having an Earth Day Work Day, April 14th (see page 7 for more info). Whether you celebrate with Lakewood or not, we hope that you will take this global holiday as an opportunity to examine what you are doing to help create a more sustainable Earth.

Have a fantastic spring season!

Anne Hoekstra, Park Naturalist



(Article resource: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earth_Day)



Lakewood Seasonal Activities

Spring: (Listed in the P & R Spring Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Spring Break Adventure Days: Bored during Spring Break? Looking for something to do. LDC offers programs on the Tuesday and Thursday of Salina Public Schools' Spring Break.

S.C.A.T.: All ages welcome. This 1½ hr program features Snacks, Crafts, Animals, and Trails. Participants will learn about native critters, take a guided nature walk, and make a snack as well as craft to take home.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Spring for a different Thursday program.

Mother's Day Trip: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take mom on a trip she will remember. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for fun.

Summer: (Listed in the P & R Summer Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Father's Day Trips: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take dad on a trip he will enjoy. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for a day of fun.

Backyard Detectives: Ages 4-5 and 6-8. These 1½ hr hour classes focus on one topic per, week, i.e. Creepy Crawlies. Each class makes a craft and snack and takes a nature walk in addition to other learning activities.

Jr. Explorers: Ages 9-12. This is an experiential learning series done in partnership with the Smoky Hill Museum. We do hands-on activities, interact with guest speakers, and travel to see what goes on behind the scenes. Each week has two days devoted to one topic.

G.R.E.A.T. Cops & Fossils: Grades 4th – 7th. These day long classes are a part of the Saline Co. Sheriff Department's G.R.E.A.T. program. Each class learns about the fossils that can be found in Kansas, and then travels to local fossil sites to search for fossils of their own. The participants will mount the fossils they find to take home.

Archery: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach the sport's technique, safety, rules, and etiquette at a beginner and intermediate level.

Canoeing: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach water safety and basic canoeing skills.

Fishing Explorers: Ages 7 and older. These day long programs offer several skill levels, beginning with Basics in Bluegills and moving on to Bass Fishing and Catfish. In each class, equipment, technique, and safety are taught.

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Fall: (Listed in the P & R Fall Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Fall Family Nature Series:

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Campfire Stories: All ages welcome, although some of the stories are scary. ☺ Spend an October evening by the campfire, enjoying smores and hearing stories told by the LDC staff.

Pumpkin Fest: All ages. Celebrate the Halloween season with an evening of pumpkin carving. Pumpkins, carving tools, and treats are supplied.

Campfire Cooking: All ages. Learn the art of campfire cuisine. Techniques and "secrets" shared on how to make a fireside feast. Then try the different foods cooked that evening by the LDC staff. Past foods have included campfire lasagna, pot pie, and cinnamon donuts.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Fall for other quarterly programming.

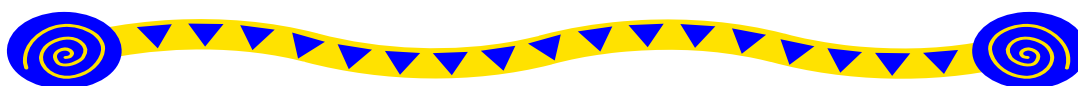
Winter: (Listed in the P & R Winter Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Eagle Day: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. This day long program takes participants to Milford Lake where bald eagles nest. The trip includes touring the Milford Nature Center, an eagle program by the MNC staff, and time for eagle watching.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Winter for other quarterly programming.

Year-Round:

In addition to the above set of programs, Lakewood offers Walk & Tours of the center, nature walks, girl & boy scout badge programs, and in-class programs. These programs are by appointment. Special topics can be requested for individual groups. Two weeks notice is required to book a program





Lakewood Quarterly Programs



We at Lakewood Discovery Center strive to create programs and trips that explore the natural world while making the experience fun and educational. The physical activity encountered during these programs and trips range from minimal to strenuous activity. To better gauge whether a program is suited for your needs, we have assigned a star system to each event, ranging from 1-5 stars. 1 star = light walking and minimal activity, 2 stars = light walking and more than one activity, 3 stars = moderate walking/physical effort and extended hours of activity, 4 stars = moderate to considerable walking/physical activity, 5 stars = substantial walking/strenuous physical effort with activity. If you have any questions, please contact us at 785-826-7335.

- Unless otherwise noted, register for classes by calling the Parks and Recreation main office at 309-5765. •



Mother's Day Trip

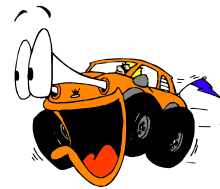
Stuhr Museum "A living history of the Prairie Pioneer"

Join us for this great family daytrip back into the past of the prairie pioneer. We are visiting Grand Island, Nebraska's Stuhr Museum a living history museum which features a working railroad town full of open mercantile shops, tinsmith and blacksmith workshops, pioneer farming and antique displays, a full scale Pawnee earthen lodge, and Native American living history. In addition to the museum, we will have a presentation of "Pioneer's History of the Wedding Dress," which is an in depth show and discussion of how wedding dresses of the period were styled and made. On our trip back to Salina, we will stop for an evening dinner in York at the famous Chances R restaurant. **

When: Saturday, May 5th
Time: 8:00 a.m. departure from Lakewood Discovery Center, return early evening
Limit: 20 participants
Fee: \$35.00 per person – includes transportation, all museum fees, picnic lunch at museum
(Evening meal at Chances R is not included)

FATHER'S DAY TRIP

Crystals and Dunes



Hey guys! Are you looking for a cool activity to do with your kids or even your friends? This trip is for you. We are going to Oklahoma's Salt Flats to dig for unique salt crystals that form on the huge flats of the basin. The Salt Flats glisten white in the sun and are flat as a sheet of paper, truly a sight to see. The crystals are the natural mineral deposits that collect just below the crusty salt surface. What you find, you can take home. After the Salt Flats we will have a picnic lunch, and then on to our dune buggy ride at Little Sahara State Park. This park is famous for its miles of natural sand dunes that attract ATV enthusiasts from all over the U.S. We will load up on a guided dune buggy tour of the park, catch some air as we ride the tops of the dunes, and have a blast with the wind in our face and the sand flying high behind us. *****

When: Saturday, June 16th
Time: 7:00 a.m. departing from Lakewood Discovery Center, returning early evening
Limit: 20 participants
Fee: \$45.00 per person (Includes transportation, digging tools, dunes tour, and picnic lunch.) Evening meal is not included.
Wear: Please bring clothes that can get dirty (a change of clothes would be recommended) and sturdy shoes.



Earth Day Work Day

Saturday, April 14

Please see page 7 for details.



Lakewood's Annual Fishing Derby

The Salina Parks and Recreation Department is hosting the 5th Annual Lakewood Fishing Derby in cooperation with cooperate sponsors. This event is free for all kids. There will be several competitions, including a casting contest and biggest fish, and prizes will be awarded to the winners. A drawing will also be held for many other great prizes. Directly following final weigh-in, we will finish the event with a hotdog roast for the participants. If you would like more information about this event please contact Lakewood Discovery Center at 826-7335 or the Recreation Office at 309-5765. *

Participants must pre-register at Salina Parks and Recreation by Wednesday, May 30th

When: Saturday, June 2
Time: 8:30 a.m. check-in, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. fishing, 11:00 a.m. final weigh-in
Limit: no limit
Age Groups: 8 & under, 9 – 11, and 12 – 14 years (Children under 10 yrs need adult supervision)
Fee: Free
Wear: Clothes that can get dirty and closed-toed shoes.



American History & Fall Foliage Tour

A classic autumn adventure tour is just around the corner for you and your friends. Our tour is packed with historical features and the beautiful fall landscapes of the New England countryside.

We will travel to Washington D.C. to tour the Capitol Building, White House, Arlington Cemetery, the Smithsonian, and many other awe-inspiring national treasures. A bus tour will charter us around the city at our leisure as we enjoy our American heritage.

Then we will head for our next destination aboard the Vermonter train, bound for beautiful upper Vermont. Our trek will take us through many other scenic states including Maryland, Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, allowing us to view some of the greatest fall landscapes in America from the comfort of our cabin seats. In addition to the natural splendor of the countryside, we will travel through many of our nation's largest cities, including Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

Later that evening we will arrive in Burlington, Vermont and check in to our hotel to relax. We will explore this classic Vermont town on the shores of beautiful Lake Champlain, home of the fabled lake monster, Champ. Burlington also the home of Ethan Allen, which the University of Vermont features in a museum on campus. We will tour the shoreline of the lake on a guided boat tour, learn about the history of the region, and view the fall foliage that makes this area so famous. We will also browse through the Church Market Square in old Downtown for authentic Vermont products. The next day we will return to Washington D.C. for our return to Salina. (4 stars)



Please contact the LDC if interested, as the open enrollment of this trip will not be available through the Parks & Recreation office until a later date. All information subject to change for final confirmation.

When: September 19 – 25
Time: TBD
Limit: 20 participants (under 18 must be accompanied by an adult)
Fee: TBD (includes airfare, ground transportation, rail service, hotels, boat tour, all entry fees and tour fees, and select meals)





LAKEWOOD DISCOVERY CENTER

Wild Birthday Parties



Looking for a new and unique way to celebrate your child's birthday? Lakewood Discovery Center has just that! We offer a variety of programs that are not only educational, but also entertaining and fascinating for everyone. Come and celebrate your special day with us!

Who: Young persons age 4 and up (some age restrictions apply for certain programs)

When: Parties available Monday – Thursday with starting times between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Reservations made by contracting Lakewood Discovery Center at 826-7335.
Please reserve at least two weeks in advance.

What: The program will be 1 ½ hrs.

Approximately 1 hr is reserved for the activity and ~ ½ hr for gifts and treats, although this schedule can be flexible.

Persons reserving the program shall provide the treats and gifts.

Fee: A fee of \$25 or \$30 will be required for the program, depending on program chosen.

A \$2 fee will be applied for each child above the number of 15, up to a maximum of 20 children

Activities

\$25 Package

Creature Feature: Meet the animal ambassadors of Lakewood! We will be getting up close and personal with some of our animal friends, such as turtles, frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards, and snakes, to learn the amazing ways they eat, hide, and protect themselves in the wild.

Nature Walk: Explore the trails at Lakewood with us! Our Urban Wildlife Sanctuary offers lots to see and discover! We will learn about the trees, plants, and animals that make Lakewood their home. Who knows what we will see?!

Lakewood Games: We all love to play games. How about games that help us learn about nature? Even better! Together we will play a variety of nature-oriented games that are fun *and* educational. (*Ages 7 and up.*)

\$30 Package

Weird Science: Whoa! Cool! This is what you will hear as we wow and amaze partygoers with volcanoes, rockets, and much more. Come learn with us as we perform science experiments with ordinary household items. (*Ages 9 and up.*)

Canoeing: Come and cruise the waters of Lakewood! We will start with basic canoeing skills, then hit the water ready for fun! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Archery: Learn the basics of archery, then try your best Robin Hood imitation here at the archery range in our forest! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Bubble Magic: Pop! Kids love bubbles! We will explore how bubbles work and then see how many different ways we can make them and play with them. (*Offered May 1 – August 31.*)



Naturalist Notes *by Bill Gaskill*

My job title is "Naturalist". Each time I am asked, "Just what does a Naturalist do? I hesitate to answer. The generic response would be to say that I spend 50% of my time doing environmental education, and the other half doing environmental conservation work. What exactly does that mean, you may ask. There is no typical day at the center. Each project, each day, each season brings with it new challenges for us here at the center.



The time of year has come when Lakewood staff once again can work in the outdoors. It's almost like we have been in hibernation. The number of calls from schools requesting environmental education programs increase. We have a large quantity of school groups who choose to have their annual class field trips at the center. The leaves can be raked from the gardens and flower beds prepared for new plantings. There are more visitors and they are always full of interesting questions regarding nature reawakened after a long, cold season. The wildlife area and Indian Rock have maintenance issues that we address in the spring. The fish feeder will need to be dusted off and the fishing area gets some spring up keeping after the long winter of trout fishing.

With all these opportunities to interact with the public an impact can be made on the perception and management of our natural resources. All naturalists at Lakewood strive to provide fun and enjoyable programs, recreational areas, and natural areas. By offering exciting and pleasant times with nature we are able to increase our contact with people. If this is accomplished there is always the chance we will spark someone's interest in their natural world. Our main goal is to get everyone out and recreating in the great outdoors. It is like the famous saying from the movie Field of Dreams. "Build it and they will come."



Earth Day Work Day

We need your help! Join us in celebrating Earth Day with a Work Day in the park. We will pick up trash, plant wildflowers, rebuild our wildlife viewing area, and build wildlife boxes to put in the park. This is an excellent way to help our local wildlife and the environment, and have fun at the same time. The Work Day is a great activity for families, church/youth groups, or individuals. So put on your work clothes and gloves, bring a friend, meet a new friend, and have some fun. Goodies will be provided. ***

When: Saturday, April 14

Time: 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Limit: 20 (15 yrs and under must be accompanied by an adult)



Stump the Naturalist

If you have a question about Kansas wildlife and/or environment, we invite you to write us and let our Naturalists sort it out. In our next issue, we will print your question along with our answer.



Lakewood Fun Page

Lakewood Trivia!

Adult Trivia Questions:

1. Why is March 21, 2007 significant?

2. Who are the founders of Earth Day?

3. What was the world's first natural park?



KIDS! Draw what you can do to help the Earth, Earth Day and every day.

Kids' Trivia Questions:

1. How can you save water at your house?
2. What do you do with old paint, used batteries, household cleaners, oil, etc. when you are done with them?
3. What can you do with your organic waste (uneaten food, leaves, egg shells, etc. instead of throwing it away?



(We would love to see your picture! Send in your picture, or a copy of it. Be sure to include your name and age. We will publish it in the next issue.)

Check out these websites for interactive, fun ways to learn more about how you can protect your world!

www.epa.gov/kids/

www.ecokids.ca

www.americarecyclesday.org

www.earth911.org

Trivia Answers:

Adults: 1) It is the vernal equinox. Day and night are the same length everywhere on Earth. (It's 1st day of spring in northern hemisphere and the 1st day of fall in the southern hemisphere.)
2) John McConnell (U.N. Earth Day) and Gaylord Nelson (U.S. Earth Day)
3) Yellowstone National Park in 1872 (4000 National Parks have been created worldwide since)

Kids: 1) Take shorter showers, wash larger loads, turn the water off while brushing your teeth, etc.
2) Take them to the Household Hazardous Waste station, 315 E. Elm St. on any Thursday.
3) You can create compost with it. Composting reduces the amount of trash going in our city dump,



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